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ABSTRACT

The Cook Islands are located in the south Pacific and had a population of 17,754 in 1981. The literacy rate was 75 percent in 1980. Free secular education is compulsory for all children between the ages of 6 and 15. There are two libraries on the islands. As of 1987, the coral island of Niue had a population of 2,422. Education is free and compulsory for 6 to 14-year-olds. There is one small public library and the one high school has a library. Tokelau is a dependency of New Zealand. The total population of the three large atolls is 1,600. Free primary education on each island is provided by the New Zealand Education Department. Some students receive scholarships for off-island secondary and tertiary education and vocational training. The bibliography contains 31 items written in English and relating to education and libraries in these islands. (JB)

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EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES IN THE COOK ISLANDS, NIEU, AND TOKELAU: GENERAL INFORMATION AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE MATERIALS

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GENERAL INFORMATION:

The Cook Islands had a population of 17,754 in the December, 1981 census. The capital is Avarua on Rarotonga. The 13 inhabited and two uninhabited islands composing the Cook Islands are located midway between Samoa and Tonga. The Cooks form two groups; the Northern Cooks which are all atolls, and include Pukapuka, Rakahanga and Manihiki, and the Southern Cooks, including Aitutaki, Mangaia, and Rarotonga, which are all volcanic islands. The total area of all the islands is 234 sq. km. Formerly a colony of New Zealand, the Cook Islands have been self-governing since 1965, in "free association" with New Zealand, where 25,000 islanders live and work. Out-migration to New Zealand is a major problem for the Cook Islands. The Gross National Product of the Cook Islands is about $20 million, giving them a per capita income of $1360. New Zealand is still responsible for the Cook Island foreign affairs, and provides more than three-quarters of the $10 million that the islands received in foreign aid in 1987-1988. At $600 per islander, this is the highest level of aid in the Pacific. About a third of the Cook Islands' budget is supplied by New Zealand cash grants.

Free secular education is compulsory for all children between 6 and 15 years old. In 1986, there were 30 primary schools with 165 teachers and 3,183 students and eight secondary schools with 146 teachers and 2,156 pupils on Rarotonga, Aitutaki, Mangaia, Mauke and Pukapuku.

The public library and museum in the capital has been renamed the National Library, and was amalgamated with the University of the South Pacific Centre Library in July, 1982. Toreora College (secondary school) also has a library.

Under the New Zealand Training Scheme, that government offers scholarships in New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Western Samoa for secondary and tertiary education, career training and short-term in-service courses to Cook Islanders. The literacy rate was 75% in 1980.

Niue had 2,422 people as of 31 December 1987, a declining population, with most of its people (8,500) living in New Zealand. Niue is a coral island of 259 sq. km. located about 480 km. east of Tonga and 930 km. west of the Southern Cook Islands. The island has been self-governing since 1970, also in "free association" with New Zealand. Niue's Gross National Product is $4 million, or almost $1550 per capita.

A small public library, with most books loaned by the New Zealand National Library Service, operates. The one high school also has a library. There are six bilingual (Niuean/English) primary schools. Education is free and compulsory between the ages of 6 and 14, and educational policy attempts to be relevant to life on the island. In 1979 there were 1,063 children attending school, but in 1987 only 702 pupils. Nieu claimed that 100% of its population was literate in 1980.

Tokelau remains a dependency of New Zealand, administered through Western Samoa. There are three large atolls with a total population of 1,600. These are Atafu (203 ha. in area), Nukunona (546 ha.) and Fakaofo (263 ha.) which lie about 480 km. north of Western Samoa. Another 3,000 Tokelauns live in New Zealand. Free primary education on each island is provided by the New Zealand Education Department with educational advisors on two-year contracts who assist the 45 qualified Tokelauan teachers. Schools receive daily radio broadcasts from the Western Samoa Education Department. Some students are sent to New Zealand, Western Samoa, Nieu, and Fiji on scholarships for secondary and tertiary education and vocat-

ional training. In July 1986, the total school enrolment was 623. A programme of adult and community education has also been started in Tokelau. Educational expenditures for 1986/87 was $N.Z. 707,500. Tokelau reported a 97.2 % literacy rate in 1980. All these Pacific islands experience the outmigration of younger, Western-educated people.

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